

THE DESERTER.

A Tale of Love and War in Far-Away Luzon.

By CAPT. HARRY L. WELLS, 24 Ore. Vols.

Saturday morning inspection was over. The men poured noisily into the barracks, placed their Springfield in the gun racks and changed their uniforms. They were all in a crowd, but the Corporal bowed and made no reply to the loud call of "Hay, Fatty!" that came several times from some distance down the room. Having asserted his indifference and refused the attention of the entire company, he finally condescended to reply by asking:

"What's 'ent' yuh sayin'?"

"Nuthin' but me. What you scratchin' fur? Say, you know a whole lot that ain't so and a few things that is what 'aunt so down on Bulger fur?"

Ignoring the tribute to the quantity and quality of his knowledge, and still buying himself in dressing for a visit to his adopted Filipino family in the Tondo district, Fatty smiled and lazily:

"Girl at home."

"I'd like to have the skunk down on me. What's the girl racket about?"

Fatty, now that he had finished his toilet and had been asked a direct question without any brickbats being thrown at the character of his information, proceeded to air his knowledge:

"You fellows don't seem to remember nuthin'," he said in a tone of scorn and making a gesture of contempt with his hand. "Don't you remember the old Bulger and Lieut. Foster had over Florence Hamilton just about the time he quit the company a year ago? He wouldn't re-enlist because he was afraid of Lieut. Foster told the girl some mean lies about him and got her down on him. Bulger thumped him one night, but that was kept quiet. Well, he and she were supposed to be engaged. When the war broke out Bulger came back to the company, and now the Lieutenant is back with a sword on his some way, and they are supposed to be engaged. When the war broke out Bulger came back to the company, and now the Lieutenant is back with a sword on his some way, and they are supposed to be engaged."

"Kind of the bulge on Bulger, ain't he?" asked Skinny, with a loud laugh at his own wit, in which he was slightly encouraged by some of the others.

"Yes, but he'd better look out. The Corporal's got a bad eye. If he don't get a bullet in the back here it will be a broken head when he comes back."

The incident provoking these remarks had not been an unimportant one as things go in the service. The Lieutenant had simply walked along the front of the line of sentries with a sword on his face, seeking some little defect in dress and equipments. He had found the khaki uniforms clean, the shoes polished, equipments all properly adjusted and clean, and the guns in perfect condition. When he had finished he posted himself in front of the center of the company and growled:

"This is a little better than we've been having. Corporal Bulger's passes are cut off for three days for not having clean shoes. Sergeant, dismiss the company."

Now, this was rather a serious matter, considering that his shoes had been polished for inspection, and the little patch of mud on the side of one of them had been the result of a girl's errand for the Lieutenant himself just before assembly, from which he had returned only in time to fall in and answer to his name; and it was especially serious because the Lieutenant knew this and purposely took advantage of it. Fatty had just expressed his opinion when there was a shout of "Attention!" and every man stood up and removed his hat as the Lieutenant entered and passed down the line of bunks to the First Sergeant's room.

A minute later Corporal Bulger also entered and busied himself putting away his equipments. Absorbed in this occupation and unaware that the company commander was in quarters, he failed to observe that individual as he issued from the Sergeant's room on his way out, and did not stand at attention when the others straightened up and saluted him. Fatty came opposite the unsuspecting offender he paused and asked angrily:

"Corporal, why don't you stand at attention?"

Bulger straightened up instantly, saluted and said, "I didn't see you, sir."

"The others saw me easily enough. Sergeant, cut off Bulger's passes for one week," and the first officer stalked out of the room.

Lieut. Foster was enjoying himself. The Captain had been on duty for two weeks, and the Lieutenant was in temporary command. In that short time he had earned the hatred of every man in the company, as was the case with the name "Cutoff." From his office in the rear of the pass privileges of the men for every real or fancied deviation from the straight and narrow way of duty.

He was enjoying his opportunity for making Corporal Bulger's life burdensome. He invented excuses for cutting off his passes, and would have put him on the kitchen table if he had not been so busy. He even charged because he could not reduce his victim to the ranks, but he dared not interfere with the company organization and he was not so stupid as to find some excuse for preferring court-martial charges against the man he had determined to ruin if possible, but Bulger was a good soldier to make that an easy matter.

As for the Corporal, he despised the Lieutenant too much even to feel hurt by his persecution. He was a good soldier, and the age of the officer had vanished and the men had all limbered up their backs again, he remarked cheerfully:

"Get it in the head, didn't I? Any you fellows got any dirty clothes? I'm staying in quarters so much now I think I'll take in washing to keep myself busy."

"Fur, ain't it?" said Fatty. "If the Cap'n should die you'd be in a bad box."

"Guess you're right, but it's all in a life time," and he turned and stretched himself on his bunk to get what comfort he could out of his day in quarters.

That night there was an alarm, and the regiment was turned out to suppress an outbreak, for which the authorities had been prepared for weeks. The insurgents had set fire to the barracks and were burning. Thousands of nipa huts were burning, and the popping of the bamboo, as the air circled between the joints heated to the explosive point, was like the sounds of a great battle.

With no equipment save a few short sections of hose and some tin pails found in deserted huts, they struggled all night, while a motley crowd of Chinese and Filipinos, seeking to save all the portable property they could from the flames, seriously impeded their efforts.

Added to this were the bullets of skulking Filipinos, who amused themselves by shooting the struggling firemen from the windows and roofs of the buildings until driven away by the street patrol.

The fire having been checked just at daylight, Bulger, a grimy-looking object of scorn and perspiration, was driven away through the great throng of refugees, to get away for a time from the heat, and to observe the strange sight of that motley crowd. He had been in a short time when a light hand was laid upon his arm and a low, sweet voice said:

"Buenos noches, señor."

He stopped, and was surprised to see that the person addressing him was an unusually beautiful mestizo girl, standing at the street entrance of a house. By her side was a bundle of clothing, evidently all she had felt capable of carrying away in the event of the house burning. Before he could do more than utter an astonished "Buenos noches," she inquired:

"¿Sera el fuego aquí?"

"No, señorita, no mas fuego."

With this assurance that the fire had been extinguished, the anxious look on the countenance gave place to a smile that revealed a beautiful set of teeth. At the same time she unslung upon him a battery of large and heavy brown eyes and opened fire with them. In an almost

crossing voice she complicated the big and strong American for their bravery and energy in fighting the fire, and invited him into the house for a cup of coffee.

Corporal was ravenously hungry after his night's work, and could not resist such an invitation, backed up with such eyes and smile and teeth. It is needless to say that before the shuffling old Tagalog woman who acted as servant had made and brought the coffee, he was completely under the spell of those glistening eyes, the smile that revealed the beautiful teeth, the soft voice and merry laugh and the caressing hospitality, and by the time

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It was now dark, and the streets were deserted by all except the patrol. Back of the house was one of the little canals that ramify Manila and connect with the river. From the back door the insurgent and the soldier, quietly taken, placed in the bottom of banca and covered with a patata mat.

Two of his captors and Maria also entered the banca, and the three, with their short, round-bladed paddles the two boatmen rapidly moved the dugout into the darkness of the night.

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Then came a loud report from an earthen redoubt in front of Calocan, and another shot followed. Then came another and another, as rapidly as the three guns of the Utah Battery could be reloaded. The insurgent camp was a mile to the right and left. Volleys of musketry accompanied them, and the crashing of the shells and bullets through the trees and in which the insurgent camp was a mile to the right and left. Volleys of musketry accompanied them, and the crashing of the shells and bullets through the trees and in which the insurgent camp was a mile to the right and left.

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CHAT OF THE CORRIDORS.

Fort Monroe is heretofore to be garrisoned by eight batteries of artillery, and to be made the strongest post in the country.

The Postoffice Department has decided to place the late President McKinley's head on the new issue of postal cards which will appear shortly after Dec. 1 next. The design includes the year of birth and year of death immediately at the left and right, respectively, of the name "McKinley," which will be directly under the head.

Above the head will be the words "Series of 1901," and above that, "One cent." The inscription, "United States of America," now appearing on the postal card, will be abandoned and replaced at a point lower down, so as to leave the space at the upper part of the card, about one-third of the width of the card, clear for postmarks.

The much discussed question as to what is the proper name of the President's official residence has been raised upon by the new President,